

Amendments to the Claims:

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application:

Listing of Claims:

1. (Currently Amended) A cover for an airbag module comprising:

a plate member having a top surface to be exposed to a vehicle cabin and a back surface, wherein the plate member is configured to be mated with an instrument panel; and
a frame member extending from the back surface of the plate member;
wherein the plate member and the frame member are configured to be formed separately and joined after formation;
wherein the frame member includes an opening for the airbag such that the frame member does not deform when the airbag is being deployed;
wherein a portion of the plate member is completely over covers the opening of the frame member such that the portion of the back surface over the opening is completely exposed to the airbag; and
wherein the plate member is an elastomeric material; and
wherein the back surface of the plate member is configured to make unobstructed contact with the airbag upon deployment.
2. (Previously Presented) A cover for an airbag module according to claim 1, wherein the elastomeric material is a thermoplastic elastomer.
3. (Original) A cover for an airbag module according to claim 1, wherein the frame member is formed of thermoplastic synthetic resin.
4. (Original) A cover for an airbag module according to claim 1, further comprising a bond between the plate member and the frame member.
5. (Original) A cover for an airbag module according to claim 4, wherein the bond comprises a vibration welded bond.

6. (Original) A cover for an airbag module according to claim 1, wherein the frame member includes a base portion.

7. (Original) A cover for an airbag module according to claim 6, wherein the frame member includes an extension member.

8. (Original) A cover for an airbag module according to claim 6, wherein the base portion is joined with the back surface of the plate member.

9. (Original) A cover for an airbag module according to claim 6, further comprising a bond between the base portion and the plate member.

10. (Original) A cover for an airbag module according to claim 9, wherein the bond comprises a vibration welded bond.

11. (Original) A cover for an airbag module according to claim 7, wherein the extension member extends in a direction away from the back surface of the plate member.

12. (Original) A cover for an airbag module according to claim 11, wherein the base portion extends from the extension member in a direction away from a center portion of the plate member and in a direction toward an edge portion of the plate member.

13. (Original) A cover for an airbag module according to claim 6, wherein the plate member includes a projection formed on the back surface;

wherein the base portion includes an aperture; and

wherein the aperture is configured to accept the projection.

14. (Original) A cover for an airbag module according to claim 13, wherein the projection is received in the aperture.

15. (Original) A cover for an airbag module according to claim 14, wherein an engagement between the projection and the aperture is undetectable.

16. (Previously Presented) A cover for an airbag module according to claim 14, wherein an end of the projection includes a keeper member, and

wherein the keeper member is configured to enlarge an end of the projection so that the projection remains engaged with the aperture.

17. (Original) A cover for an airbag module according to claim 16, wherein the keeper member comprises caulking.

18. (Currently Amended) A cover for an airbag module according to claim 14, further comprising a retaining member, and

wherein the retaining member is attached to an end of the projection so that the projection remains engaged with the opening aperture.

19. (Original) A cover for an airbag module according to claim 18, wherein the retaining member comprises a clip.

20. (Currently Amended) A cover for an airbag module comprising:
a plate member configured to be mated with an instrument panel; and
a frame member extending from a back surface of the plate member;
wherein the plate member and the frame member are configured to be formed separately and joined after formation;

wherein the plate member is formed of thermoplastic elastomer; and
~~wherein the back surface of the plate member is configured to make unobstructed contact with the airbag upon deployment.~~

wherein the frame member includes an opening for the airbag such that the frame member does not deform when the airbag is being deployed; and

wherein a portion of the plate member is completely over the opening of the frame member such that the portion of the back surface over the opening is completely exposed to the airbag.

21. (Currently Amended) A cover for an airbag module for a vehicle comprising:
a plate member having a top surface to be exposed to a vehicle cabin and a back surface, wherein the plate member is configured to be mated with an instrument panel; and
a frame member connected to the back surface of the plate member;

wherein the frame member is not integral with the plate member and includes an opening for the airbag so that when deploying, the airbag does not deform the frame member; wherein the plate member is an elastomeric material; and

wherein a portion of the plate member is completely over the opening of the frame member such that the portion of the back surface over the opening is completely exposed to the airbag. wherein the back surface is configured to make unobstructed contact with the airbag upon deployment.

22. (Currently Amended) An airbag module for protecting an occupant of a vehicle comprising:

an airbag; and

a cover having a plate member and a frame member;

wherein the plate member has a top surface to be exposed to a vehicle cabin and a back surface;

wherein the frame member extends from the back surface of the plate member;

wherein the plate member is configured to be mated with an instrument panel;

wherein the plate member and the frame member are configured to be formed separately and joined after formation;

wherein the frame member includes an opening for the airbag such that the frame member does not deform when the airbag is being deployed;

wherein a portion of the plate member is completely over eovers the opening of the frame member such that the portion of the back surface over the opening is completely exposed to the airbag; and

wherein the plate member is an elastomeric material; and

wherein the bottom surface is configured to make unobstructed contact with the airbag upon deployment.